

Chapter Three

By Endurance We Conquer

INTRODUCTION

The book, *Endurance*, written by Alfred Lansing, tells the remarkable story of how Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton and his crew of twenty-seven courageous men and one castaway, set out on a journey to be the first humans to cross the South Polar continent. They set sail on their journey on August 1, 1914 from London, England in a three-masted wooden vessel that had originally been named the *Polaris*. However, after the ship was purchased for Shackleton's expedition, Shackleton renamed the ship *Endurance*, in keeping with the motto of his family: *Fortitudine vincimus*—"by endurance we conquer."

For two years prior to the *Endurance's* voyage, Shackleton was disappointed time after time with promised grants for financial assistance that continually failed to come to pass. However, through his unwavering persistence and confidence, Shackleton's dream became reality as he and his crew finally began their incredible adventure.

Along the journey, and while sailing through the Weddell Sea, the *Endurance* was battered with gale-force winds up to 150 miles per hour and waves that at times reached 80 feet high. Temperatures in the region would often plunge to minus 100 degrees Fahrenheit. In addition, the long polar nights, where there was no sun day after day and week after week, challenged the men beyond what most humans could only dream of surviving.

Eventually, the *Endurance* was trapped and crushed in the ice-filled waters leaving Shackleton and his crew to continue the thousand-mile journey on foot, often drifting on ice packs and having to cross unnamed mountains and glaciers.

Shackleton's driving passion was to save his crew and bring every man home alive. Through his determination, Shackleton overcame seemingly insurmountable odds and eventually accomplished his goal in bringing the members of the crew of the *Endurance* safely home.

During their struggles, often in the face of death, the men of the *Endurance* would not allow themselves to even consider the possibility of failure. They did not allow themselves to ever have the thought of having to accept a "plan B." This proved to be one of the keys of their survival and success. If they had considered failure, their doom would have been sure.

In the end, Shackleton and his crew demonstrated genuine nobility and learned the true meaning of the name given to their ship, *Endurance*. Likewise, as true Knights of the Cross and champions of the faith, and during what will prove to be some of the most challenging days on earth, we, too, will have need of endurance along the journey we each have begun.

Endurance in the New Testament is defined as: To bear up courageously; to wait; to stay under; to remain; to have fortitude; to have a cheerful or hopeful constancy; to persevere until the end.

Endurance in the dictionary is defined as: To continue in the same state; to last; to remain firm under suffering or misfortune without yielding; to undergo hardship, adversity, or stress without giving in; to be lasting and durable (regardless of the situation).

Look up the scriptures and answer the following questions, all of which speak of how endurance is defined in the Bible, and why and what we must be able to ENDURE!

1. Read Hebrews 10:35-39.

What does the writer of Hebrews encourage the believers to hold onto and that would bring a great reward to them if they did? _____

How would you define this word? _____

See Leader's Notes...

Philippians 3:3 instructs us to, "**...worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.**" Paul

reminds the believers that they are not to base their confidence in other people, themselves, nor in their circumstances, but in

_____.

Discuss why placing our confidence in people will ultimately lead to our being disappointed.

Psalm 20:7 says, "**Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.**" (Take some time to discuss what this verse might mean and how this verse could be relative today. (Look at chariots and horses as representing the military of any given nation)

See Leader's Notes...

What does Hebrews 10:36 say that we, as believers and disciples of Jesus Christ, have need of? _____

This verse assures us that if we have endurance, we will more likely be able to accomplish the _____ of God.

Take some time to discuss what is meant by the phrase, "the will of God."

2. Read II Timothy 2:1, 3.

What would enable Timothy to remain strong in doing what he believed to be the will of God for his life?

What did Paul call Timothy in verse 3? _____

Why do you think Paul called Timothy by that title? _____

What did Paul remind Timothy that he would have to endure as he sought to carry out God's will? _____

The crew of the *Endurance* encountered much hardship along their journey. For them, the question regarding their facing hardship was not "if," but "when?" What mattered most was how they would handle the hardship they faced. They learned by experience that through endurance they could conquer or overcome any hardship. The same is true for the true Knight of the Cross and disciple of Jesus Christ. Whatever we face may be too hard for us, but it is *not* too hard for God. We have to make the choice to not quit, but instead to stay the course.

Read Joshua 23:5-6 and compare what is commanded in this verse with how Shackleton and his crew never considered a "plan B" when faced with hardship. How might making such a commitment might benefit you in your desire to obey and do the Lord's will.

3. Read II Timothy 2:7-10.

What one thing in this verse did Paul want Timothy to remember that would give him strength to undergo any hardship? _____

Although Paul was admitting that he was in chains, what did he want Timothy to know could not be chained? _____

What was Timothy to endure? _____ What are some examples of things you think Paul was referring to?

Who was he to endure these things for? _____

Why was he to endure these things? _____

NOTE: Timothy was instructed to endure "all things" for the sake of those who were lost and needed to be saved. In other words, when we persevere or endure whatever comes our way with God's strength, others will take notice and many will even turn to the Lord because of our testimony of endurance.

4. Read II Timothy 4:3-5.

What is mentioned in these verses that we are to endure?

5. Read and comment on II Corinthians 4:16-18. Direct your discussion in regard to these four areas:

- Our heart
 - The nature of our afflictions
 - The eternal versus the temporary
 - Things that are seen and things that are unseen
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-
-
-
-
-
-

6. Read I Corinthians 4:11-12.

How are we to respond when facing persecution? _____

7. According to Matthew 5:10-12, how does Jesus tell His followers they were to respond when being persecuted for doing what they know is right? *(Circle the correct answer.)*

- We are to immediately stop doing what we are doing so as to avoid any attention.
- We need to retaliate swiftly and ruthlessly.
- We need to run and hide until the coast is clear.
- We should find someone else to blame.
- We should start crying so our persecutors will feel sorry for us.

- We are to rejoice and be glad.

8. Read James 1:12.

What are we to endure in this verse? _____

What is promised if we do this? _____

ACTIVITY

Write down an experience, hardship, temptation, persecution, or affliction that you have experienced and had to endure, and that, as you look back, now realize that God used that experience to add something very valuable into your life. Share your experiences.

RECAP

Like the crew members of the *Endurance*, we also must never allow ourselves to consider failure. In fact, the Bible promises us that God always leads us in triumph in Christ (see II Corinthians 2:14)

We will always have the need for endurance. As Knights of the Cross, we are to be a people who possess *staying power*, which is the ability to remain on the path God has for us regardless of what may come our way. God's grace will always be enough for us to endure *all things* and *anything*. Although we will encounter many things that will be too hard for us, we will never face anything that will be too hard for God.

PERSONAL PRAYER

Lord, give me the grace to endure anything I may face while doing Your will. Help me to stay the course and never consider failure as an

option. Lord, may others come to You through my testimony of endurance and may you be glorified. Thank You Lord that You are with us. I am confident that I can handle anything because of Your strength. In Your Son's Name I pray, Amen.

POWER VERSE

"Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise." (Hebrews 10:35-36)

Take time to write down some things God has spoken to you or has shown you through this lesson: (This may be done at home or in a group setting at the end of the lesson.) Take some time to pray before completing this section.
